RAJYA SABHA

Wednesday, the 23rd *April,* 2008/3 *Vaisakha,* 1930 (*Saka*)

The House met at eleven of the clock,

[MR. CHAIRMAN in the Chair.]

OBITUARY REFERENCE

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members, I refer with profound sorrow, to the passing away of Dr. (Kumari) Sarojini Babar, a former Member of this House on the 20th April, 2008 at the age of 89 years.

Born at Bagni in the Sangli district of Maharashtra in January, 1920, Dr. Babar had her education at the University of Pune, Tilak Vidyapith, Pune and Sahityani Sanskriti Mandal Mumbai.

A litterateur, Dr. Babar was associated with various educational and cultural institutions. Dr. Babar served as Chairman of the Maharashtra State Folklore Committee, Maharashtra Sahitya Parishad and Maharashtra Lok Sahitya Parishad. Dr. Babar had many publications to her credit. She was also Editor of the 'Samaj Shikshan Mala', published from Pune.

The legislative career of Dr. Babar commenced with the membership of the Maharashtra legislative Assembly, where she was a Member from 1952 to 1957. She also served as a Member of the Maharashtra Legislative Council from 1963 to 1966. Dr. Babar represented the State of Maharashtra in this House from April, 1968 to April, 1974.

In the passing away of Dr. Sarojini Babar, the country has lost a distinguished litterateur and an able Parliamentarian.

I request hon. Members to rise in their places and observe silence as a mark of respect to the memory of the departed.

(Hon. Members then stood in silence for one minute)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Secretary-General will convey to the members of the bereaved family our deep sense of sorrow and sympathy.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Meeting shortage of Officers in the Army

*421. SHRIMATI SYEDA ANWARA TAIMUR:††
SHRI VIJAYA J. DARDA:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Short-Service Commissioned Officers and Officers from Territorial Units, after usual NDA pattern training, can significantly contribute towards meeting the shortage of over 11,000 officers in the Army; and

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††The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shrimati Syeda Anwara Taimur.

(b) if so, whether an indepth study will be undertaken through internationally or nationally renowned Defence experts in this regard so that maximum number of our boys from schools/ colleges are motivated towards joining the Defence Forces?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU): (a) and (b) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) Short Service Commissioned Officers (SSC) are an integral part of the Defence Forces. The SSC Officers are trained on similar pattern as imparted by the National Defence Academy (NDA), except that it is for a shorter duration and at a different Academy. However, the Territorial Army is set up to augment and relieve the regular army of their static duties during national emergencies and for providing aid to the civil authorities in dealing with natural calamities and maintenance of essential services.

The shortage of officers in the Defence Forces is both in the Permanent Commission as well as in the various SSC Cadres. There is a provision for grant of Permanent Commission to willing SSC (Men) officers, provided they fulfill the eligibility criteria. Intake of SSC officers do contribute towards meeting the shortage of officers. However, since the existing total cadre strength of SSC officers itself is less, it will not be able to meet the shortage of officers in any significant manner. Similarly, there is a provision for officers of the Territorial Army, who volunteer and meet the prescribed criteria, to be considered for grant of Short Service Commission. However, the number of such officers is less to make any significant contribution to meet the shortage of officers in the Army.

There is no proposal by the Services to conduct any study by engaging internationally or nationally renowned Defence experts. However, a number of in-house studies have been conducted by the Defence Services on the issue. In addition, the Defence Forces have undertaken a number of sustained image projection and publicity campaigns to create awareness among the youth on the advantages of taking up a challenging and satisfying career.

The Shortfall in recruitment of officers in the Army is largely due to change in the socio-economic environment and the resultant changes in career preferences, better employment opportunities in other sectors, tough selection procedures and service conditions of the Defence Forces.

A number of measures have been intiated by the Defence Forces to address the problem of shortage of officers which include candidate-friendly recruitment procedures to attract more number of candidates and a focused publicity drice in various institutions to attract potential candidates. Awareness campaigns, participation in career fairs and exhibitions, advertisements in print and electronic media, counselling and motivational talks in schools, colleges and NCC camps are also some of the other measures in this direction. In addition, the commitment and bravery of the Armed Forces is consistently projected through the electronic and print media.

SHRIMATI SYEDA ANWARA TAIMUR: Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister, since the inception of the Short Service Commission, how many officer from all the three Services have been inducted into the Short Service Commission so far and how many of them are men and women?

SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU: Sir, the total number of Short Service Commission officers in the Army is 3312; in the Nevy, it is 1257 and, in the Air Force 1771. As of now, rules permit only men to be inducted into the permanent commission.

SHRIMATI SYEDA ANWARA TAIMUR: Sir, women are inducted only as Short Service Commission officers; all the three Services offer only Short Service Commission to women officers. The Short Service Commission has an initial compulsory contractual tenure of five to seven years, which, depending upon the service, is extendable up to a minimum term of ten years. This was reviewed in the year 2002 and all the three Services extended the term of the Short Service Commission to 14 years. Unlike other male officers who have the option of a permanent commission at the time of joining, women officers are not extended the option of a permanent commission at any stage in their service. At the end of their maximum tenure of 14 years, they have to leave the Services. The ceiling of their tenure in the Services has a serious limiting effect on the career of women officers, as they reach a certain date in their career while they are in their early or mid 30s.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question please.

SHRIMATI SYEDA ANWARA TAIMUR: As long as the women officers in the Services are denied the choice of a permanent commission, their services in the armed forces will remain merely a job and not a dedicated career option. Now, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government is planning to extend the option of permanent commission to the women officers with the male officers. If not, why? Why is this disparity and discrimination when women are employed on equitable terms, and will there be any meaning in placing further opportunities for men?

SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU: Sir, the Ministry is totally empathetic to the situation. As of now, like as I said earlier, the rules only permit men to be inducted into the permanent commission. There was a Committee formed, consisting of the Chiefs of Staff which looked into the matter, and has given certain recommendations. If you would recall, Sir, in the last Session, the hon. Raksha Mantri also said that we are looking into the matter of inducting women into the permanent commission, and the Raksha Mantri has been consistently following the matter in the Ministry.

श्री विजय जे॰ दर्डा: सभापति महोदय, यह हमारे देश की रक्षा और सुरक्षा का विषय है और लगातार लोग यहां से छोड़ कर जा रहे हैं, माननीय मंत्री जी अभी इंडियन आर्मी में 11,000 से अधिक, एयर फोर्स में 6,000 और नेवी में 3,000 से अधिक अधिकारियों की कमी है। मेरी जानकारी में आर्मी, नेवी और एयर फोर्स से पिछले दो सप्ताह में सौ से अधिक अधिकारियों ने pre-mature retirement के लिए आवेदन दिए हैं और तीन हजार आवेदन मध्य क्रमांक अधिकारियों के पड़े हुए हैं तथा कहा जा रहा है कि इस Sixth Pay Commission से आशा के अनुरूप उनको नहीं मिलने के कारण यह हुआ है। इसके बारे में आपके मंत्रालय की क्या प्रतिक्रिया है तथा इतने लोगों द्वारा आर्म्ड फोर्सेस छोड़ने से हमारी preparedness पर कितना असर पड़ रहा है और इससे निपटने के लिए आप क्या करेंगे? साथ ही साथ ऑपरेशन लेवल पर जहां फारमेशन ऑपरेशन कर रही है, वहां पर sanctioned strength 25 आफिसर्ज की थी, लेकिन वहां पर भी 12 से 14 आफिसर ही हैं, ऐसी स्थिति खतरनाक है। हमारी सुरक्षा के लिए उससे निपटने के लिए आप क्या कर रहे हैं?

श्री सभापति: आप एक सवाल पूछिए, पांच सवाल मत पूछिए।

श्री विजय जे॰ दर्डा: सभापति महोदय, एक ही सवाल का ए, बी और सी है। अभी 148 कॉलेज graduates ने military entrance test पास किया था, इसमें से 62 ने प्राइवेट सेक्टर में जॉब ले लिया है और Indian Military Academy में 250 vacancy के against में सिर्फ 86 अधिकारी नियुक्त हुए, यह बड़ी खतरनाक स्थिति है। ऐसी स्थिति से निपटने के लिए आप recruitment policy बदलेंगे या military compulsory करेंगे, यह भी मैं आपसे जानना चाहता हूं?

SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU: Mr. Chairman, Sir, this is a matter of concern, but it is not a matter of alarm. We know there is a shortage of officers and a lot of officers are also trying to leave because of the incredible opportunities that are arising in the private sector. I can say that pay is not necessarily the only factor that attracts men and women to the armed forces. As you are aware, Sir, the conditions of services and the terms of employment in the armed services are challenging, and we are constantly seeking to improve that to make it more attractive for the officers' cadre. Similarly, we are also trying to improve the overall situation for everybody. But, at this stage, the shortage and the people who are trying to leave is primarily from the non-select ranks which are the officers who are actually leading the men on the ground. The Ministry is doing its best to improve the service conditions, and, again, the *Raksha Mantri* has taken up the matter after the Sixty Pay Commission recommendations to see how well we can compensate our officers better.

श्री विजय जे० दर्डा: सर, मंत्री जी ने compulsory के बारे में नहीं बताया। ...(व्यवधान)... श्रीमन्, मेरे प्रश्नों का जवाब नहीं आया है।

श्री सभापति: देखिए, आप अगर पांच-छः सवाल पूछेंगे, तो यही होगा। अगर आप एक sharp सवाल पूछेंगे, तो उसका आपको straight जवाब मिलेगा। ...(व्यवधान)...

श्री प्यारे लाल खंडेलवाल: उसी सवाल का हिस्सा है compulsory!

श्री सभापति: नहीं, वह नहीं है सवाल का हिस्सा।

SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Sir, there is scarcity officers and there are a number of vacancies which are to be filled up. Has the Government evolved any emergency or extraordinary plan to fill up these vacancies? If not, why? What are you doing with the amount that is accumulated which you have not been able to pay as salary due to these vacancies?

SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU: Sir, the Ministry is doing all that it can to address the shortage of officers in the non-select ranks, like improving the service conditions and increasing the number of intake channels especially the Short-Service Commission channel and the Technical Entry Scheme channel. These are also the measures, which we are taking to increase the capacities in the two premier institutions that we have, that is, the NDA and the Indian Military Academy at Dehradun, and also the OTA. Regarding the pay, I think, after the Sixty Pay Commisison recommendations again these matters are being pressed for re-examination especially for the non-select rank offivers' pay scales and the pay scales of the soldiers on the ground.

SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Sir, ...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do you want to put the second supplementary?

SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Yes, Sir, if I am...

MR. CHAIRMAN: I am afraid, one only.

SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Sir, but answer to my question is not satisfactory.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You can raise that point.

SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: I am not raising the point. I am just saying that the answer was not satisfactory, Sir.

SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU: Sir, the question put by the hon. Member was not clear. The question was not clear and I did not understand what is the amount ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRY SYED AZEEZ PASHA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to know from the Minister whether there is any proposal to de-link the Central Government employees' pay from the Army's pay. Is there any move to ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI AMAR SINGH: If the question raised by the hon. Member was not clear to him, he should not have answered. ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Let us hear the clear question. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: He has given answer to an unclear question. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU: No, no, Sir, I am talking about the second part of her question. ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please repeat your question. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: The question is, what is the plan and what are you doing with the money that you are saving? ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU: Vacancies from where?

SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: In the Army? ...(*Interruptions*)... We are talking about the Army. ...(*Interruptions*)... We are talking about those 11,000 vacancies in the Army. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU: What I can say is that it is a very abstract question. ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Will the hon. Member. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU: We have a certain number of vacancies for the officer now. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Sir, 'attractive' is also a very abstract answer. ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: No discussion please. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU: There are a designated number of ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: How can he used the word like 'attractive' for the Army? ...(*Interruptions*)...

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): Sir, the salary of the Army personnel is part of the revenue budget in the Army. Whatever is the saving, it is spent on other expenditure. Revenue expenditure is 100 per cent. So, no money is wasted.

SHRY SYED AZEEZ PASHA: Sir, would like to know from the hon. Minister whether there is any move to de-link the Central Government employees pay from the pay of the Defence personnel or officers. This is number one. Number two is, whether there is any proposal under consideration to raise the basic pay from Rs. 1000 to Rs. 3000 for the officers below the rank.

SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU: Sir, I think, what the hon. Member is alluding to is the military service pay which right now is Rs. 1000/- and, as you know-- while the officers get Rs. 6000/- —this anomaly has been pointed out after the recommendations and this is being examined.

SHRI SYED AZEEZ PASHA: What about de-linking it from the Central Government employees' pay?

SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU: That is another issue which is being raised not only by the men from Armed Forces Forces but also by a lot of hon. MPs and that also will be looked into.

श्रीमती विप्लव ठाकुर: मैं मंत्री जी से यह कहना चाहती हूं कि शॉर्ट सर्विस कमीशन में जब उनको परमानेंट किया जाता है, उसकी परफॉर्मेंस भी देखी जाती है, उनकी एसीआर में देखी जाती है और साथ में उनकी च्वाइस भी पूछी जाती है। मैं जानना चाहती हूं कि क्या यह सच है कि जिन लोगों को शॉर्ट सर्विस कमीशन में जब उनको परमानेंट किया जाता है, तब उनका रैंक लो कर दिया जाता है? अगर वह मेजर है तो उसको कैप्टन बना दिया जाता है, अगर वह कर्नल है तो उसको मेजर बना दिया जाता है? क्या इस वजह से भी जो शॉर्ट सर्विस कमीशन के लोग हैं, वे परमानेंट कमीशन में ऑप्ट नहीं करते हैं, यह मैं जानना चाहती हूं?

SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU: Sir, after the recommendations of the A.V. Singh Committee Report what has been done is, the number of years needed for promotion for the three categories of Captain, Major and Lieutenant Colonel have been shortened to the duration of two years, six years and 13 years which has certainly helped the cause.

SHRIMATI VIPLOVE THAKUR: No, no, my point is, when the short service commissioned officers were made permanent, their rank was always made lower. If he is in the rank of Major, when he is made a permanent officer he is given the rank of Captain. Is it true and that is why so many officers are opting out of getting permanent commission. That was what I wanted to know.

SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU: Sir, I do not think that would be true because, I think, once they are inducted into the Armed Services, as they rise in the ranks, both the short service commissioned officers and permanent service commissioned officers are treated alike and their promotional aspects are also treated on par.

रुपये के मूल्य में हो रही वृद्धि के कारण लघु उद्योगों में उत्पन्न बेरोज़गारी

*422. **श्री राज मोहिन्दर सिंह मजीठा:**††
डा॰ मुरली मनोहर जोशी:

क्या **श्रम और रोजगार** मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या यह सच है कि डॉलर की तुलना में भारतीय रुपये के मूल्य में हो रही वृद्धि और लघु उद्योग क्षेत्र में बंद पड़ी 4 लाख इकाइयों के कारण वर्ष 2007 के दौरान 13 लाख कर्मचारियों के बेरोजगार हो जाने की संभावना है; और

(ख) यदि नहीं, तो इस संबंध में सरकार का आकलन क्या है?

श्रम और रोजगार मंत्रालय के राज्य मंत्री (श्री ऑस्कर फर्नांडिस): (क) और (ख) एक विवरण सभा पटल पर रखा गया है।

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††सभा में यह प्रश्न श्री राजमोहिन्दर सिंह मजीठा द्वारा पूछा गया।